

## Transforming the World by 2030 through Sustainable Development - Role of Libraries

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### ABSTRACT

*Sustainable development has a standing position for the continuation of the world's livability. The world has been facing Sustainable Development challenges since long. To address these global challenges the blueprint of 17 sustainable development goals has been formulated to achieve a better and sustainable future. Goals, also known as 'Global Goals'. United Nations Member States adopted these goals in 2015 to be achieved by 2030 for peace and prosperity of people and planet now and for future. The 2030 Agenda consists of 17 Global Goals and 169 targets that were put on urgent call for action by all countries- developed and developing in a global partnership. These goals seek to build on success of Millennium Development Goals by adding some new areas and complete what they can't achieve. The Sustainable development requires a number of stakeholders to interpose for its achievement and library is one such stakeholder. Libraries play a vital role in the success of any country, society or institution. These are key sources for providing adequate and pertinent information in an accessible way to aware people about Sustainable development and provide them a map for achieving the sustainable development goals. The aim of this paper is to address the role of libraries for achieving sustainable development, raise awareness about sustainability and offer some strategies for how libraries can wholly contribute for achieving the Global Goals.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development Goals, Library and Information Services, ICT Trainings.

### Introduction

Sustainable development is part of the mission of almost all countries including international organizations, national institutions, corporations, and non-governmental organizations. This broad concept was widely exposed by the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN, 1980) and since became central to thinking on development as well as the environment and was later promoted by Brundtland Report-1987. Our planet's future is a matter of great concern and how to make it safe and secure for the present as well for future generations deals with the concept of sustainable development. The maintenance of sustainability has become an acceptable challenge for human society since the corrosion of environmental conditions in various parts of the world to which humanity has to pay more attention.

The achievement of sustainable development requires the active involvement of all stakeholders- individuals, businesses, administrators, and countries. The main motive of this concept is to address the challenges that humanity is facing and ensure people have opportunities to live a better life without compromising the needs of future generations.

The basis of sustainable development in the twenty-first century is access to information and knowledge for the public. Libraries are essential to accomplish the United Nations referred agenda of Transforming the World as a Plan of Action for people, the planet, and prosperity through social and economic transformation. The information sector should have a strong commitment towards the realization of the global initiative of Sustainable Development Goals of 2030 for which libraries are the best initiative. These act as a hub of innovation, discovery, findings, research and knowledge for empowerment of people to address the challenges. Libraries are viewed as important players in

facilitating unrestricted access to knowledge and information and utilize this information effectively for development of a nation. The aim of this paper is to throw light on role of libraries for achieving sustainable development, creating awareness about sustainability and suggest some ways through which libraries can wholly contribute for achieving the Global Goals.

### **Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

Sustainable development got visible attention across the world through famous document of World Commission on Environment and Development known as "Brundtland Report" titled as "Our Common Future" in 1987. The environment, society, and economy are the three pillars of sustainable development. Achieving Sustainable Development requires ensuring the sustainability of these dimensions. The United Nations members established a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals in order to address global issues and accomplish the goal of sustainable development. The motive of these goals was to create a common set of development for all countries. The global goals consisting of three dimensions - environmental, social and economic include the following concepts:

- **Environmental:** This dimension includes the issues of protection of natural resources (soil, water, energy, agriculture, air and biodiversity), reducing environmental pollution, switching to renewable energy sources in place of non-renewable ones, and halting global warming, increasing green areas and recycling of products.
- **Social:** This dimension includes concepts of peace and human security, human rights, gender equity, social justice, social services, health and education right.
- **Economic:** This dimension deals with incorporation of new paradigms like circular economy, conservative use of resources, income and expense balance, investing in high income sectors (Atmaca, A.C. et al; 2019)

Sustainable development deals with expansion, improvement, development, and satisfaction of individuals and is defined as "meeting the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." WCED, 1987. The idea entails developing a social and economic structure that guarantees improvements in real income, educational standards, national health, and quality of life in general." (Duran, D et al 2015)

The importance of sustainable development stems from the need to balance the rate of regeneration of natural resources with their use, with a focus on their preservation. Sustainable development involves the main goals of development like economic growth, fulfilment of basic needs and rights etc. Within the constraints of the world's natural resources, sustainable development encompasses a broad range of interconnected challenges in the areas of environmental, economic, social, and political to guarantee that people on the globe experience peace and prosperity by the year 2030. It should ensure to provide a higher standard of living for all people, including the present and future generations. To stimulate the action and achieve the agenda of sustainable development raised by the United Nations, a set of items were framed in the form of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, also known as Global Goals which are as:

- Globally eradicate poverty in all of its manifestations.
- Encourage sustainable farming, achieve food security, improve dietary intake, and eradicate hunger.
- Assure that all people, regardless of age, lead healthy lives and promote wellbeing.
- Ensure that every student receives a top-notch, inclusive, egalitarian education and promotes chances for lifelong learning.
- Establish gender equality and empower all girls and women.
- Ensure that everyone has access to sanitary facilities and clean water.
- Assure universal access to affordable, sustainable, and modern energy.
- Promote complete and productive employment, respectable employment for all, and long-term, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth.
- Develop resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and support innovation.
- Diminish disparities both within and between nations.

- Create inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and human settlements.
- Ensure sustainable practices in both production and consumption.
- Take immediate action to lessen climate change's effects.
- For sustainable development, preserve and use marine resources responsibly.
- Prevent the loss of biodiversity, halt the deterioration of land, safeguard, repair, and encourage sustainable use of forests, desertification, and terrestrial ecosystems.
- Promote peaceful, inclusive communities for sustained advancement, guarantee that everyone can access the legal system, and establish inclusive institutions at all levels.
- For sustainable development, fortify the implementation plans and revitalize the global partnership.

Sustainable Development Goals work on the principle of "include all". These goals provide. These are more determined and cover a broad range of interconnected issues from environmental, social and economic dimensions. These goals are expected to play a leading role in achievement of global goals (Omona, W. 2020).

### **Role of Libraries**

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without involvement of society for which a society needs to be knowledgeable in using its resources judiciously as well preserve them simultaneously. The library plays the vital role of educating the society by providing information resources that meets the needs necessary for development. The only source of providing the users the education and knowledge they need are libraries and information centres by promoting literacy and reading culture. What we need for better future and success is already written, but need is to discover it by spending some time at libraries as they facilitate access to information, preserve sources of information, store and promote literacy. Libraries articulate the concept of sustainable development by aligning appropriate resources, supporting research processes, supplying relevant literature as well as excavating literature about the concept. They are a place for growth and reinvention, a place which aids in navigating the information age and act as a hub for civic and cultural engagement necessary for achieving the goal of sustainability. There is a strong connection between libraries and development as they provide opportunities for everyone, offer access to world knowledge and provide expert guidance.

UNESCO's belief about library is that it acts as a crucial factor in promoting mental harmony and spiritual well-being among individuals, which will ultimately aid in the realisation of any kind of social and economic change and make the globe a different planet. "There is no sustainable growth in a genuine sense without access to information and no meaningful, comprehensive access to information without libraries," said Donna Scheeder, a past president of IFLA, in an appropriate statement." (Scheeder, D. 2015). To view a world that is sustainable, libraries all over the world are working for achieving the goals and targets framed for sustainable development. Some global initiatives of libraries are as:

The government of SriLanka runs the e-Library Nenasala Programme, which aims to eradicate poverty in the nation by providing instruction in fundamental computer skills, advice on how to access information on the Internet, and various locally relevant knowledge, intends to expand access to technology and digital literacy among the poorest citizens of the country who reside in isolated rural areas.

The population is spread across thousands of islands, making it more difficult for them to access education. The National Library of Indonesia offered numerous library services by boat to this population, raising their literacy and educational level in order to achieve Quality Education SDG-4.

To meet SDG 8: "Good Jobs and Economic Growth," public libraries in the European Union provide ICT training and public access so that people can apply for jobs. The figures show that 250,000 people in the European Union find work each year through their local public libraries.

In order to support SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, the Makerere University Library publishes the Uganda Health Information Digest, which provides printed materials on current illnesses and health issues for medical professionals who are unable to access the information online.

The National Library of Uganda has launched an ICT training program tailored to female farmers to make sure these women have access to weather forecasts, crop prices, help in establishing online markets in their native tongues, and support in advancing women's economic empowerment, thus addressing SDG 5: Gender Equality and Women Empowerment.

Western Kenya and Uganda's Kisumu Public Library involves students in exciting debates, quizzes, and spelling battles by the use of its smartphone, laptop, and video conferencing initiative to assist schools in rural regions of western Kenya and Uganda, which is a Support for SDG 9: Innovation and Infrastructure accomplishment

The Biodiversity Heritage Library, an ongoing open-access digital library in the United States that houses biodiversity literature, supports SDG 15: Life on Land and halts biodiversity loss. It has more than 46 million pages from more than 170,000 volumes of literature in more than 40 languages that was published between the 15th and 21st centuries. Scientists can use this data to map population and ecosystem growth, discover new species, and simultaneously enhance climate change forecasts.

A group namely SDGs Action Group has been established on Facebook by Nigerian librarians to gather suggestions on how libraries can promote the SDGs through tweets, posters, and radio broadcasts.

The need is to have strategic planning, policies, and recommendations for educating all parties involved about the SDGs. To help libraries include the SDGs in their strategic plans and policies, provide awareness, inspiration, and resources to them. Libraries are crucial in spreading the word about how the SDGs address issues that are vital for the future. Access to information and high-quality research provided by libraries make people aware of the importance of achieving global goals. Also driving of new projects that address SDGs facilitates in making the concept known to all.

Thus, libraries may help sustainable development in a number of ways, such as by offering the knowledge and tools needed to facilitate the achievement of universal literacy, support research, and high-quality education, uphold hygiene, encourage good health, and strengthen the nation's economy.

### **Conclusion**

- Building an ideal nation requires a holistic approach and all facets of human activities and indices of nation building must be taken care of if all SDGs are to be achieved by a
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A holistic approach is needed and fulfilment of nation-building indices is required for the achievement of sustainable development. For proper information management, distribution, and dissemination, effective library and information services are required to have a greater impact on the achievement of sustainable development. To cope up with the challenges and achieve sustainable development, libraries are essential for spreading awareness of the idea and educating consumers about it. The inclusiveness character of libraries as well as sharing, collaboration and facilitation platforms help a lot in supporting and achieving sustainable development. It bridges the gap by providing pool of sources of information and appropriate services to common masses for achieving the objective of sustainable development.

### **Recommendations**

- It is required that libraries need to form partnership with non –governmental organizations and other agencies for the support needed in the achievement of sustainable development.
- Libraries should focus on organizing time-to-time workshops, seminars and symposiums for awaking the public about sustainability and encourage them to come forward for the achievement of the same.
- Adequate professional development of the library staff must be the priority to participate fully in the achievement of the goal.
- The inclusion of ICT and proper trainings to be managed for better usage of the facility, adopting new strategies from different sectors will promote the achievement of global goals.
- Adequate funding, its proper usage and working on infrastructure development will facilitate the usage of innovative ideas for achieving sustainable future.

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